



## U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

### **The Surface Transportation and Freight Policy Act of 2012**

Our nation's surface transportation system is fundamental to the health of our nation's economy and its continued growth. The U.S. population is expected to reach 420 million people by 2050, a 50 percent increase since the year 2000. Freight traffic volumes are expected to double by 2035. Our federal investments in the surface transportation system have lacked direction toward addressing anticipated and significant changes to the way we invest in infrastructure must be made if the United States wants to remain mobile and competitive in the 21st century.

To establish the foundation for meeting these challenges, the *Surface Transportation and Freight Policy Act of 2012*, Title III in Division C, would create a clear and unified mission for our federal surface transportation and create a dedicated freight program. The Secretary of Transportation would be required to focus improving investments in our surface transportation to accomplish specific goals and objectives to improve safety, goods movement efficiency, and rural connectivity. Transportation advocates had long called for such a policy tied to specific performance goals.

### **Comprehensive Policy and Performance Goals**

- Creates a national surface transportation and freight policy to define the purpose of the system, including supporting the national interest and defense, interstate and foreign commerce, the efficient and safe interstate mobility of people and goods, and the protection of the environment.
- Requires the Secretary to detail the long-term vision for freight and surface transportation programs through a surface transportation and freight strategic plan. The strategic plan would be geared toward accomplishing specific goals, such as reducing motor vehicle- and truck-related fatalities by 50 percent by 2030.
- Improves DOT's data collection and assessment tools and authorizes a state or metropolitan planning organization pilot program to develop such tools.

### **Other Provisions in Title III**

- Requires the Secretary to establish standards to ensure the design of federal surface transportation projects provide for safe and adequate accommodations; collect data to help better design infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events; and focus on Make it in America initiatives.